



Story County Planning and Development
Administration Building
900 6th Street, Nevada, Iowa 50201

Ph. 515-382-7245
www.storycountyiowa.gov

MEMORANDUM

TO: Story County Board of Supervisors
FROM: Amelia Schoeneman, Planning and Development Director
RE: Procurement of land for temporary disaster debris site
MEETING
DATE: March 22, 2022

As part of the 2022 work program, the Planning and Development Department is to procure a site for temporary disaster debris staging and processing. Processing and staging debris on a site prior to disposal facilitates an orderly and efficient recovery process. Additionally, Story County does not have a landfill and the Boone County Landfill's construction and demolition debris capacity is limited.

This item has been on previous work programs. In 2016, staff sent a letter to 82 property owners that met buffering requirements from residences and floodplain, and were within a quarter-mile of a highway. Staff sent letters to owners of commercial and industrial land, including Martin Marietta, and Iowa State University. Staff also reached out to County Departments. The department received back two questionnaires from landowners interested in working with the county. After working with the County Attorney's office to draft a lease and further discussions with the property owners about leasing property in 2018, they decided they were not interested.

In December of 2018, the department reached out to other County Departments to determine if any would be interested in jointly purchasing land that could be used as a temporary debris site in addition to another needed use. There was no interest. The Emergency Management Department suggested that Planning and Development reach out to cities in Story County to potentially coordinate on leasing, buying, or using city-owned property.

The cities of Maxwell and Nevada currently have debris sites and were initially interested in entering into a 28E agreement to allow the county to use the debris sites. After the 2020 derecho, it was determined that if a disaster affects a city as well, the sites would not be fully available. Additionally, the sites have portions in the floodplain/natural areas.

In response to the 2020 derecho, the county leased land for debris that was the location of a former stover site. The owner of this site had indicated that they were only interested in vegetative debris on the property at the time.



At the 2021 joint Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Supervisors meeting to discuss the annual work program, the purchasing of a debris site instead of leasing was discussed. It was also suggested that staff reach out to county departments and bring up the need as part of the upcoming county space needs study.

Staff drafted a new letter to send to property owners and inquire about their interest in selling the county land for a site. Selected property owners were those with property approximately 10 acres to 20 acres in size, over a quarter mile from any residences, and in close proximity to a paved road. Floodplains were also excluded. The letter went to 37 property owners of approximately 90 parcels of land.

Staff received responses from five property owners. Several were interested in selling other parcels of land that did not meet siting requirements. Other parcels were later determined to present issues due to the proximity of the sites to Interstate 35 and Highway 30 and potential conflicts with burning or debris falling off of vehicles on the highways.

The property owners of the previously leased site recently reached out to staff and are now interested in selling 20 acres, which includes the previously used site, to the county. They would also allow other types of debris than vegetative to be located on the site. The acres they are interested in selling are the northern 20 acres (northern third) of the property. Staff believes that this is the best option for a debris site and would like to request direction to begin negotiations.

The Story County Engineer indicated that they would be interested in also using the site for stockpiling of dirt and rock for road construction projects. The Facilities Management Director indicated the site would be too far from county buildings to support a storage building for their use. Staff would also investigate planting hay or CRP on the site as an interim use when the site wasn't needed for disaster debris.

The site, shown in Figure 1, is located on the corner of 600th Avenue and 160th Street (60016 600th Ave) in Milford Township. Due to the previous stover storage use, there is a remnant of a gravel base on the site. The western portion of the site meets the Iowa Department of Natural Resources separation requirements from dwellings if vegetative debris were burned. 600th Avenue is a paved road. The accesses to the site are located on 160th Street, which is gravel. The two accesses have a drive connecting them, which allows one-way vehicle circulation.



Figure 1: Proposed Disaster Debris Site Aerial Image

With direction to start negotiations from the Board of Supervisors, staff would work with the County Attorney, County Assessor, and Board of Supervisors Chair to come to an agreed upon price with the property owner. The purchase agreement would also include contingencies, as negotiated. One contingency may be the development of a plan for the site's use including plans for appropriately accepting, storing, and handling debris on the site, any agreements with other agencies for final disposal, and plans for any necessary site preparation work. This was discussed as part of the department's 2022 work program. We would prepare an RFP to request a consultant to complete this plan. Prior to preparing the RFP, staff would come back to the Board of Supervisors to request consideration of providing unbudgeted funds to cover the RFP.